

205
A Catholic Christian
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CONFERENCE

BETWEEN

TWO GENTLEMEN,

A

**PAPIST and PROTESTANT,
Concerning Religion :**

IN WHICH

**The Principal Arguments of a late Book,
entitled, *The Catholick Christian instructed*,
are answered.**



L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-*
noster-Row. MDCCCLIX.
(Price One Shilling.)

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CONFERENCE

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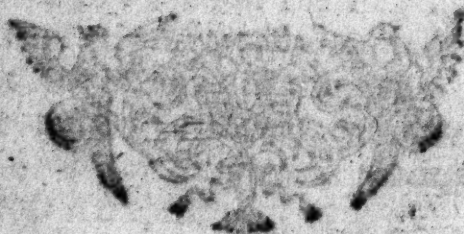
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men : But how does that make sense ?



A

CONFERENCE, &c.

the old exploded Fables of the Virgin Mary, and

Pa. Have always had a good Opinion, Sir, of your Understanding and Conduct, and have a great Friendship for you : I am therefore very sorry that you should not be in the right

Way to Salvation : If you please, we will enter into the Merits of the Cause.

Pr. With all my Heart, Sir, and I hope I shall be able to defend my Religion, if not to satisfy you. What do you chuse to begin with ?

Pa. In the first Place, I think your Priests and your Bishops may profess a Parliament Religion, and act as People employed by the State, but cannot have a real spiritual Character, or true Orders, because you have no uninterrupted Succession.

Pr. The State has a Right to interpose (as all good Governments have had) for the Support of Truth, and for the Correction of manifest Errors, both in Doctrine and Practice, in Clergy-

men.: But how does that make ours a State Religion, when it was an Agreement of both Church and State to correct apparent Abuses, and to stick to the pure Religion of Christ, as he had left it? Our Bishops and Ministers are, I believe, derived in a direct Succession from the Apostles; what Succession then do you require?

Pa. A Succession of Pastors and Doctrine.

Pr. I shall answer you about Doctrine by and by: But why might not our first Reformers receive their Orders from Bishops of your Communion (for I suppose you will not insist upon the old exploded Fable of the *Nag's Head*) and yet preach against your Corruptions, as their Authority to preach the Gospel implied.

Pa. Their Authority! I affirm it, and I have good Grounds for it, that it is necessary to Salvation for every human Creature to be subject to the Bishop of Rome.

Suprema-
cy of the
Pope.

Pr. Upon what Grounds?

Pa. Upon the Definition of the Pope.

Pr. Well, but I do not admit the Definitions of any Party, not even of the Pope, in his own Favour: Besides, the Pope is not *Christ*.

Pa. But *Christ* gave this supreme Authority to the first Bishop of Rome, *St. Peter*; *Matt. xvi. 18, 19. I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock, &c.*

Pr. Well, but by this *Rock* many of the ancient Fathers understood *St. Peter's* Confession, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*, not his Person. However, 'tis much more certain that he was Bishop of *Antioch* than of *Rome* (though none of the Apostles could properly be called Bishops of any See, according to the present Use

Use of the Words) and by a Canon of the Primitive Church, a Bishop could not change his See: If he had any Privileges therefore, they should descend to the Bishop of *Antioch*. But how should his personal Privileges, and his Supremacy among the rest (if he had any) descend to his Successors, any more than his Inspiration, or his Power of working Miracles? If the Apostles must be subject to *Peter*, shall those who survived *Peter*, for Instance St. *John*, be subject to *Linus*, or *Cletus*, or I know not who, Bishops of *Rome*, and *Peter's* pretended Successors in this late-invented Supremacy?

Sure I am, that Pope *Gregory*, before the Corruptions of Popery were in being, complained grievously of *John*, Patriarch of *Constantinople*, for taking upon himself the Title of *Universal Bishop*, and pronounced it Fore-runner of *Antichrist*. And yet that Pope's next Successor but one, *Boniface III.* obtained that Title from that Miscreant *Phocas*, who slew his Master the Emperor *Mauritius*, and usurped his Throne, and afterwards massacred great Numbers of the People at a Show, something more than six hundred Years after *Christ*. The Bishops of *Rome* had, indeed, a Precedency of Honour before that, because their See was in the first and most honourable City of the Empire; but they were often opposed by other Bishops, who are now accounted Saints; nay, some of them were even declared *Hereticks*, and anathematized by Councils. But, in Truth, St. *Peter* never had any Supremacy over the rest of the Apostles; for these boasted Prerogatives of his, and, among the rest, the Power of the Keys, which

which is equivalent to that of binding and loosing, were conferred upon them all, *Matt. xviii. 18. Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, &c.* and again, *John. xxi. 22, 23. Receive ye the Holy Ghost, &c.* And if Peter was a Foundation, the other Apostles were the same, *Eph. ii. 20.* Nay, when there was a strife among the Apostles who should be greatest, which was a proper Occasion, one would think, for our Saviour to command them to submit to St. Peter, instead of that he says, *Whoever will be great and chief among you, let him be your Minister, your Servant, Matt. xx. 26, 27.* Lastly, St. Peter was justified by St. Paul to the Fact, because he was to be blamed, *Gal. ii. 14.* Indeed, if we must have a Prince among the Apostles, he should seem rather to be St. John, or St. Paul, as I could shew on the Comparison.

Pa. Well, but our Saviour committed to St. Peter the particular Inspection of his Flock, when he said unto him, *John xxi. 16. Feed my Sheep.* And you know a Shepherd is to drive away Wolves.

Pr. That was no Reason why he should lord it over his Fellow-Shepherds; nor does he: He exhorts, not commands; *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who also am an Elder, 1 Pet. v. 1.* Besides, the Question, *Lovest thou me?* and the Charge, *Feed my Sheep*, was only a restoring St. Peter to his Office, from which no other of the Apostles had so shamefully fallen.

Suprema-
cy of the
King.

Pa. Why, you have a Headship of the Church, a Supremacy among you too; and you give it to the King, nay, sometimes to a Woman, to the Queen, who must not meddle with spiritual

spiritual Things, unless they would be guilty of Sacrilege. Surely it suits the Pope, who is a spiritual Person, better than these.

Pr. Our Kings and Queens give no Orders, nor minister in holy Things, therefore they commit no Sacrilege; all the Headship they claim, is only an outward one, appointed for the Sake of Regularity and Discipline, that they may assist the Church with the temporal Power, to maintain the Truth, and to curb insolent Offenders; but not to domineer it, as the Popes do, over the Souls and Consciences of Men. Such a reasonable Authority, as our Kings have, the Emperors had of old, who presided in Councils of the Church, and were sometimes applied to by the Popes themselves to assemble Councils.

Pa. But your Reforming Priests broke their Celibacy Vows of *living single*; and it must be a goodly of the Reformation that was brought in by Perjury. Clergy.

Pr. It has been proved that they were under no such Vows; but if they were, as those Vows were unlawful, and the Sources of infinite Corruptions, they ought to be broken: For if a Man makes an unlawful Vow or Oath, all the Time he adheres to it, he continues to defend his Sin in making it.

Pa. Can there be any Sin in entering upon so holy an Engagement, as a single and pure State of Life, unincumber'd with the Cares of the World, and appropriated to the Service of God?

Pr. As for the Purity of it, 'tis sometimes to be questioned, because 'tis often accompanied with burning Lusts, or the impure Gratification of them: But I say, the Vow is unlawful, because

cause God has no where warranted any Man to presume so far upon his own Strength, as to swear he will live chastely in a single Life.

Pa. But if he may not depend upon his own Strength, he may upon God's Grace.

Pr. Ay, where he has promised it : For Instance, I may lawfully vow not to be drunk, or not to commit Murder, and rely upon the Grace of God, together with my own Care, to keep me from such Wickedness ; but all Men have not the Gift of Continency, nor does any Man know beforehand, whether he shall have it for the whole Term of his Life ; and there is a natural Provision for the natural Appetites of Men, *viz.* Marriage, from which no Order of Men is excepted ; God Almighty therefore is not bound to make good any Man's rash Vow. The greatest Part of Men have an Appetite to Marriage ; of what *Platonic* Cast are your Priests, that they shall be sure to overcome this Appetite ? But the more moderate among you allow, that it is not unlawful for Priests to marry (for why should they be denied one of your Sacraments ?) but that it is a politic Invention, to keep up the Dignity of your Priests, by keeping them from Poverty. To which we add, that it makes them more dependent upon the Pope, in as much as they have no Families to be Pledges of their Fidelity to the State. And now I cannot but take notice of the Unfairness of a late Writer of yours, who taxes our Translators with corrupting a Text of Scripture for

Author of our Purpose in this Point, 1 Cor. vii. 9. Our the Ca- Translation has it, *But if they cannot contain, thelick let them marry : He says the Original is, If Christian instructed. they do not contain, let them marry. Very well, and*

and will he defend his Translation? Will he say that St. *Paul* advised Christians not to marry, till they actually did not contain, till they were guilty of some actual Uncleanness? He taxes us also with falsifying *Matt. xix. 11.* where our Translation has it, *All Men cannot receive this Saying*: He says the Original has it, *All Men do not receive this Saying*: I say no; the Original has it, *All Men have not Place* (*οὐ χωρεῖ*) *for this Saying*; therefore our Translation is good.

Pa. Shall your new up-start Sect compare ^{Where} with our good old Catholic Faith? We know ^{was your} your Date; You are but about two hundred ^{Religion} Years old: ^{before} *Where was your Religion before Luther?*

Pr. If no Reformation was ever good, then Christianity, when it was first established, was not good; if the oldest Religion be best, then *Judaism* is better than *Christianity*, and *Heathenism* better than both. Have a Care of attacking the *Reformation* with Argument by which *Christianity* must fall. Shall Error be established by Custom, and Idolatry by Prescription? or shall no Abuse be ever corrected that is old? Where was our Religion before *Luther*? It was in the *Bible*, where your distinguishing Doctrines never were. Or if you demand a *Visible Society* where our Religion was professed; I answer, it was professed among yourselves; for you retained all the Truth, but had built much Hay and Strubble upon it: we rejected the Trash, and kept what was good and valuable: Where is the Absurdity of this? I grant that whatever is

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really *New* in Christianity is false; but so were your Doctrines which we rejected. Our Religion is not a new one, but a Republication of that which was professed by the Primitive Christians of old. We could not reform the Church, before it was corrupted, nor reject Errors, before they were in Being. According to your Argument, if I had a dirty Face, which I had not washed for six Weeks, I ought not to wash it at all: or if I did, you might ask me with as good a Grace, where was my Face before it was washed?

The Re-formation blamed for the Faults of the Reformers.

Pa. We know well enough whence your sprung, and from what *Causes* your Religion took its Rise; from the Rancor of *Luther* against the *Dominicans*; from his Pride and Passion, and Contempt of his Superiors; from the Lust and Sacrilege of King *Henry VIII.* and from many Vices, too tedious to name, in your notable Reformers.

Pr. I desire you will say nothing about Vice, lest you oblige me to ransack the *Dunghills* of your *Popes*, whose Wickedness has been most amazing, most abandoned; inasmuch that one of your own Writers has observed, that when you got a Pope of a moderate Size of Wickedness, like that of other Men, you thought you had got a good Pope. But Personal Faults do not make Mens Opinions either true or false; *The Truth* may be held in the midst of *Unrighteousness*. Besides, God can bring Good out of Evil, and can take Occasion from the Passions of Men to effect the great Designs of his Providence. *Luther* was passionate; who is without a Failing? but it was not his Rancor against the *Dominicans*,

Dominicans, but the shameful Market of *Pardons* and *Indulgences*, set up by Pope *Leo X.* for the Advantage of his Sister *Magdalen*, that put him upon opposing the Pope's Authority. King *Henry* was a Papist, lived and died a fiery burning Papist, though he shook off the Pope's Authority, and suffered the Scriptures to be translated; which providentially became a Door for the Reformation to enter at. Notwithstanding, King *Henry*, bad as he was, if compared to some of your *Popes*, was a Saint. And if some of our *English* Reformers had their Faults, I am not solicitous to defend them, but only the Reformation: 'tis certain, however, that many of them were bright Examples of Piety, and Martyrs for their Faith.

Pa. But you divided *Christ's* seamless Coat; you made a *Schism* in the Church of God, *Schism*. and therefore separated yourselves from all the Privileges of it; for out of its Bosom there is no Salvation. *Eph. iv. 4, 5. There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.* And *Schism* (if we may trust the Fathers) is a Crime of the most heinous Nature.

Pr. I grant, that *Schism* is a great Sin; but you were the Persons guilty of it, in imposing unlawful Terms of Communion, so that we could not join with you without lying to God, and wounding our Consciences; and whether we ought to obey God or Men, judge ye. Besides, we do agree in these grand Essentials; we worship the same Lord with you; we receive the *Catholic Faith* in the three *Catholic* Creeds, Faith.

Baptism.

Creeds, for one of them professes to declare it; we receive *Baptism* too, as *Christ* instituted it, though not with all the Fopperies, and idle, not to say filthy, Ceremonies, which you have added to it. And if, notwithstanding this, you will keep at a Distance from us, and thunder out your Excommunications against us, we value them not; knowing that we are of *Christ's* Fold, inasmuch as we bear his Voice in the holy Scriptures (*John x. 3.*) which you disregard. Now, most certainly, you are the Schismatics, who are Aliens to our *Israel*, Enemies to the National and Established Church, nay even to the Civil Interest of your Country.

Pa. Does not the Thing shew itself? Truth can be but on one Side, but Errors are infinite. As soon as you separated from the Catholic Church, you were broke into endless Sects and Divisions, and every Man carves out a Faith for himself: A just Judgment upon you for forsaking the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

Pr. You do ill to reproach us with those Divisions, which your treacherous Emissaries have been chiefly instrumental in producing. But you, to be sure, have no Divisions among you: what then are your violent Disputes about the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin; about Grace, and Free Will, and Pre-determination; and about the Seat of Infallibility, a more capital Point than any we differ in? Do not your *Jansinists* tally with our *Presbyterians*? and your *Quietists* with our *Quakers*? Your Definition of *Unity* is, that it consists in the Conjunction of the Members under

under one Head, the Pope : Where then was your Unity in your many Schisms, some of which lasted for several Years ; and when you had sometimes two, sometimes three Popes at the same Time ? You have, indeed, the Art, though you differ in many Things, yet to keep up Church-Communion with one another ; and if we were wise, we should do the same. But the Truth is, you dare not break the Peace of your Church, for Fear of Racks and Tortures, of Fire and Faggot : your boasted Union proceeds only from your Doctrine of Persecution ; and Charity, and mutual Forbearance is, in our Opinion, a much better Expedient than that. Where-ever Human Nature enjoys its Birth-Right, Liberty, Mens Opinions will vary : Thus it was in the Times of the Apostles, when there were many Heresies and Divisions : Nay the Apostle says, *there must be Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you,* 1 Cor. xi. 19.

Pa. Do we defend, or practise Persecution ? Persecu-

Pr. Yes, you defend it ; for by the Bullion. *In Cena Domini, &c.* which is read every Year at Rome, you curse Heretics, and deliver them over to the Secular Arm, to be punished and burnt ; and as to your Practice, let your Massacres in France and Ireland, your Fires in Smithfield and Baliol, and your Inquisitions in Spain and Portugal, bear Witnesses.

Pa. What you call Persecution is only the seasonable Use of Force to make Men consider for the Good of their Souls ; and when they do consider, 'tis probable they will embrace
the

the Catholic Faith. Thus when the *Spaniards* conquered the Nations of *Mexico* and *Peru*, how long would it have been before these poor ignorant Creatures would have considered the Christian Religion, if Force had not been applied to awaken their Attention? Besides, the Scripture justifies it; *Luke* xiv. 23. Our Lord says, *Go out into the High-ways and Hedges, and compel them to come in, that my House may be filled*; and *Gal.* v. 12. *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.*

Pr. As for your Argument for Persecution in Point of Expediency, I think the Truth is quite on the contrary Side: Instead of being inclined to think well of a Religion by Fire and Sword, Men will hate and abhor it; Force may make a Hypocrite, but never a sincere Christian. It cannot convince the Judgment; and no Action is pleasing to God, that does not proceed freely from the Will. 'Tis a hopeful Doctrine, indeed, to burn Men's Bodies for the Good of their Souls: At that Rate, *St. Paul's* Determination is not right, that it is not lawful *to do Evil that Good may come*, *Rom.* iii. 8. 'Tis an excellent Way of quoting Scripture too, to make it contradict itself. The whole Temper and Complexion of the Gospel is that of Peace and Charity and Forbearance, not of Rancor and Violence. The latter was a fit Way for such an Impostor as *Mahomet* to propagate his Tenets, but by no Means for Christians. When that exterminating Spirit shewed itself in two of the Apostles, who would *have called down Fire from Heaven* on the Village of *Samaria*, which received not our Saviour,

our, he rebuked them, and said, *The Son of Man was not come to destroy Mens Lives, but to save them, Luke ix. 54, &c.*—*Compel them to come in.*—By the Compulsion here mentioned, must be meant the Cogency of Argument and Truth: Indeed, nothing is more common in all Languages, than to say the *Force of Reason*, or the *Force of Truth*; and the Apostles made Use of no other. A similar Expression to this we have, *Luke xxiv. 29.* where it is said, *They constrained [κατέστανον] our Saviour to abide with them*; and yet you do not suppose the Disciples used any actual Force. As for the Instance of *St. Paul's* wishing for the Excision of certain wicked Persons; we are to consider that *St. Paul* was under the immediate Inspiration of God, which none of your Popes or Priests, I hope, will pretend to be; nor does he direct the *Galatians* to cut off the Adversaries of the Faith, but leaves it to the Providence of God: After all, the Cruelty and persecuting Spirit of your Church has not been able to do much Harm. It has furnished our Religion with an invincible Army of *Martyrs*, the Testimony of those faithful and pious Persons, who, in the Reigns of King *Henry VIII.* and Queen *Mary*, were burnt for confessing and maintaining our most holy Faith.

Pa. Well, but (as *Pope Boniface* has instructed us) the Church has two Swords, the Spiritual and the Temporal; for when the Apostles said, *Lord, behold, here are two Swords*, the Lord answered, not that it was too much, but enough, *Luke xxii. 38.* Certainly, he that denies the Temporal Sword to be in *Peter's* Power,

Power, but ill observes that Saying of our Lord, *Put up thy Sword into his Place, Matt. xxvi. 52.* And as Cardinal *Baronius* told Pope *Paul V.* in the Case of the *Venetians*, there were two Things said to St. Peter; the one, *Feed my Sheep*; the other, *Arise and kill, Acts x. 13.* This, I suppose, is the Foundation of the Pope's Power of deposing Heretic Kings, asserted by the Council of *Lateran*, and put in Practice by so many Popes. To which is added that of *Jeremiah i. 10.* See, *I have this Day set thee over the Nations, and over the Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.* Near a kin to this is the Pope's Power of dispensing with Oaths and Moral Obligations, asserted in the same Decretals. This he does, by declaring the Law of God does not bind in such a Case, or by releasing the Party concerned from the Obligation.

Infallibility of the Pope.

Pr. My good Friend, insist no more upon those Decretal Epistles; for they supply us with an invincible Argument against the Pope's *Infallibility*. In them we find such false, and apparently ridiculous Interpretations of Scripture, made by the Popes, as would make even one of our School-boys laugh, who understands *Greek*. And of this Sort are those you have quoted. As to your *two Swords*, which were in our Saviour's Company, how could the Pope be so absurd as to imagine they both hung by St. Peter's Side? Certainly, he had only one of them, the Temporal Sword, if you please; and that he was forbid to make Use of. The Power of *Arising and Killing*, which was given

St.

St. Peter, we will indulge the Pope in with all
 our Hearts, (except on Fast-Days) if he will kill
 only *four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things,*
and Fowls of the Air, such as seemed to de-
 scend to St. Peter in the Vessel. And 'tis
 much if *Jeremiab's* Prophetical Call can justify
 the Pope's pulling down Kings and destroying
 Kingdoms, since the Pope is no Prophet. Be-
 sides, *Jeremiab* only declares the Excision of
 Kingdoms in the Name of God, but does not
 execute it himself. Your Doctrine of deposing
 sovereign Princes by the Pope's Authority, is
 the most flaming Transgression of that Precept
 of holy Writ, *Rom. xiii. 1. Let every Soul be*
subject unto the higher Powers, &c. for all that
 the Pope has put in his Caveat, in his Inter-
 pretation of that Text, *Thou shalt not revile the*
Gods, nor curse the Ruler of thy People, *Exod.*
xxii. 28. Which setting Priests before Kings
 (he says) calls them Gods, and the other
 Princes. For God's Sake compare this Ex-
 position with *David's* and *Paul's,* *Psal. lxxxii.*
and Acts xxiii. 5. and you shall see how your
 infallible Interpreter has hit the Mark. But
 his Exposition of another Text, relative to this
 Subject, *1 Pet. ii. 13.* will shew that he had
 very little Acquaintance with the *Greek Lan-*
guage. He tells the Emperor of *Constanti-*
nople, that St. Peter wrote that to his own
 Subjects, to provoke them to the Merit of O-
 bedience and Humility; for if he had meant
 thereby to lay the Yoke of Subjection upon
 Priests, it would follow, that every Servant
 must rule over them, since it is said, *Omni bu-*
mane Creatura! But the Pope may well be
 C. Pope

Solicita.
 De Majo-
 ritate.

Vide Bi-
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 worth,
 Ubi plura.

Pope Almighty (as Father Maria Caraffa called Pope Paul V. in a Book dedicated to him, without being checked for his Blasphemy.

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PAULO. V. VICE-DEO, Pontificia
Omnipotentia Conservatori acerrimo; which,
by the Way, in Numeral Letters, makes up
the Number of the Beast, six hundred and sixty
six, mentioned Rev. xiii. 18.) He may well
be Pope Almighty, I say, if he can dispense
with the Laws of God. With the Laws and
Traditions of Men, of which he has good
Plenty, he may well dispense; but he might
better pretend, that he has a Power to stop the
Course of the Sun, when he pleases, than that
he has a Right to dispense with the Obliga-
tions of Morality; for *Heaven and Earth shall
pass away, but one jot, or one Tittle shall not
pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled, Matt.
v. 18.*

Infalli-
bility of
General
Councils.

Pa. Well, I do not much care for asserting
the *Infallibility* of the Pope, but that of the
Pope and a General Council I do maintain and
defend. Nay, we have Scripture for it; *Matt.
xxviii. 20. Lo, I am with you always, even
unto the End of the World* (says our Saviour)
to direct you, and keep you from Error. And
does not St. Paul assure us, that the Church
is the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, 1 Tim.
iii. 15? It cannot therefore support false Doc-
trine. Our Lord says, *the Gates of Hell shall
not prevail against the Church, Matt. xvi. 18.*
And he has promised, *the Spirit of Truth shall
abide for ever with the Teachers of the Church,
to guide them into all Truth, John xiv. 16, 17.*
Chap.

Chap. xvi. 13. Moreover, the Tenor of the first Decree of the first Council is, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to Us*, Acts xv. 28. Therefore Councils act under a Divine and Infallible Direction.

Pr. It gives us good Room to conclude, that you have no such Thing as Infallibility among you; since you cannot agree where to fix it; some of you (viz. all the Jesuits) placing it in the Pope; some in a General Council; and others in the Pope and a General Council acting some Way in Concert. Such a Point of Faith as this, upon which you make all the rest depend, if it had been revealed in Scripture at all, would have been revealed plainly; and not left to be gathered from such remote Hints as you produce. It would have been as plainly said, *The Church of Rome is Infallible*, as that *Christ is the Son of God*. But what are your Texts to the Purpose? May not *Christ be with his Church*, to protect it with his providential Care, nay preserve it from all damnable Errors, and yet not preserve it from all Error. You might conclude, with a much better Shew of Reason, from the Promises of Divine Grace; particularly that full one, 2 Cor. ix. 8. *God is able to make all Grace abound towards you, that ye always having all Sufficiency in all Things, may abound to every good Work*; that Christians may live without Sin; than from this Promise of Divine Protection, that the Church shall be without Error. May not the Church also be the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, i. e. a faithful Guardian of the Holy Scriptures; and yet have a Superstructure of

Indefec-
tibility
of the
Church.

And In-
fallibility.

much *Hay and Stubble*, of much *Trash*, and many *Falshoods* built upon it? At least, *St. Paul* supposes so. *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail*, &c. i. e. *Satan shall not destroy the Church of Christ* (for so the Original Word *καταρῶσθαι* means;) but there shall still be a visible Church: But what is that to its being kept free from all Error? Christ shall always have a Church upon Earth; but there is no Promise that any particular Church in any Nation shall remain to the End of the World: As the Churches of *Asia* failed, so may that of *Rome* entirely fail, and yet Christ's Church not be destroyed. The Holy Spirit *was with the Apostles* all their Lives, and *did lead them into all necessary Truth*; which Truth they have set forth in the holy Scriptures. This Promise cannot extend to the Successors of the Apostles, unless you will affirm they can prophesy too, for it is said in the same Verse, *he will shew you Things to come*. It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, who, by the Message of an Angel, declared his Acceptance of *Cornelius*, though but a converted Heathen, and to the Apostles, *not to lay any greater Burden*, &c. Besides, in that Council *St. James* seems to preside (though I believe no one really presided) more than *St. Peter*; for he says, *My Sentence is*, &c. But will the reigning Pope, and his Bishops, pretend they have as much Intercourse with the Holy Ghost, as the Apostles had? If they do, let them work as good Miracles to prove it, and we will believe them.

Pa. They do work Miracles. But there must be an Infallible Judge, because it is absolutely

olutely necessary for the Good of the Church there should be one. The Scripture, indeed, is a Rule; but it cannot apply or interpret itself; the Infallible Judge must do that. Our Temporal affairs are directed by the Laws of the Land, and yet you are not so absurd as to fancy that Secular Controversies can be decided by the Law without a Judge.

Pr. It is necessary that Secular Controversies be determined, because the Commonwealth cannot otherwise subsist; but the Church may well enough subsist, though many of her Controversies were not decided till the last Day: or, if they must be decided, a *wise and competent* Authority may suffice to do it, though not an Infallible one. Besides, as there being a Supreme Judge in the State does not put an End to Murder and Robbery; so neither could an Infallible Judge put an End to all Controversies and Heresies: for in Fact we find that both subsisted in the Times of the Apostles, who were really Infallible Judges. Nay, if there were still an Infallible Judge, unless every Christian could infallibly know him to be so, and infallibly understand his Definitions, what better should we be? The Scripture cannot apply itself; but an honest Mind may generally apply it truly, though not infallibly. Will you pretend to be wiser than God, and to say, it is necessary there should be an Infallible Judge, therefore he has appointed one? How much more modest, as well as true, would it be to conclude thus, God has not appointed one, therefore none is necessary? Strictly speaking, there never was a *General Council*; however, now it is impossible there should be any such Thing, because

Christendom

Christendom is broke into so many Kingdoms and Sects, of various Interests: therefore if the Church had any Infallibility, she has lost it. But if every particular Church could send in its Deputies to a General Council, the Doctrines of *Rome* would be condemned by a large Majority: You do ill, therefore, to boast of your Numbers to ignorant People, as you sometimes do. Indeed, you have so many Ways of evading the Decisions of Councils, where you do not like them, that they are of very little more Weight with you than those of the Popes.

Pa. But is not Infallibility asserted in the *Creed*, in the Article, I believe the *holy Catholic Church*?

Cathol-
icism.

Pr. No: You may believe there is a *Catholic* or *Universal Church*, and that she is holy in her Calling, in her Institutions, and in some of her Members, and yet she may not be privileged from Erring. But suppose the *Catholic Church* were Infallible, what is that to the Church of *Rome*? She is not *The Catholic Church*, unless a Part, and that a corrupt one too, can be the Whole: Nor is she *A true Catholic Church*, because of her Corruptions in Point of Doctrine. She is indeed a true Church, as that means a *real Church*, just as a Man overspread with the Leprosy, is still truly a Man; but she is not a true Church, as that betokens *sound*. As for your Title of *Roman Catholic*, 'tis a great Absurdity and Contradiction, as much as to say *Particular-Universal*, *Part-Whole*. I insist therefore, your Church has no Infallibility, because she has actually erred, in your Doctrines of *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, &c.

Pa.

Pa. If you give Way to *Private Judgment*, and let every body interpret Scripture as they list, you will have as many Faiths as Men; whereas Christ said, *If he hear not the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen and a Publican*, Matt. xviii. 17.

Pr. That was spoken with respect to the *Censures* of the Church, issued with good Cause for Immorality: what Relation then has it to Faith? Every Man, to be sure, must judge for himself, by the Light that God has given him, making Use of his own Reason, and the Instructions of those who are capable to teach him, which is still acting reasonably. And our Saviour warrants it, when he says, *Why even of your own selves judge ye not what is right?* Luke xii. 57. But 'tis false in Fact, that the Church of England is unsettled in her Principles, or the Faith of her Members, any more than that of Rome; only our People dare speak more freely than yours. If we have *Speculative Atheists and Infidels*, you have the same under the Covert of your Communion; insomuch that it has been observed, they abound more at *Naples and Rome*, than any where else: And 'tis natural they should; for seeing through a great many Forgeries and Impostures of your Priests, in those Places where Popery sits in Triumph, they hastily conclude that all Religion is an Imposture. Your Discipline, indeed, is so good, that they dare not declare themselves openly.

Pa. We allow Men to make Use of their Reason in enquiring which is the true Church; and when they have found it, it is but reasonable

Private
Judgment.

Atheists
and Infidels.

able

able they should suffer themselves to be conducted by it.

Pr. That is (as one has well expressed it) You must make Use of your Eyes, till you have found your Guide, and then you must hoodwink them or put them out. But you said you had *Miracles*, by which you could defend Infallibility.

Pa. So we have, many and great ones, worked in every Age of the Church, from the Apostles to the present Times, and well vouch-ed and attested.

Pr. That Pretence is only one Instance, among many others, of the Falseness of your Religion; and is a Thing which, in my Opinion, will, in Time, greatly contribute to the undeceiving the World. Many of your *Reliques* have been discovered to be false, and at this Day you pretend to have the same *Reliques* in different Places; and your most famous Marts of *Miracles* have been found out (particularly at the *Reformation*) to be so many Dens of Imposture. Your *Miracles* are to the last Degree ridiculous and absurd (as any one that will take Pains to ransack the Legends of your Saints may find) highly unworthy of God; conducive to no good End or Design; but calculated to confirm false Doctrines, to enrich your Priests, and to support the most Anti-christian Idolatry; pretended to be worked in Corners only, where the Inquisition reigns, and your Priests are Masters both of the Bodies and Souls of Men. “ And if one of those “ *Miracles*, which your Church that pretends “ to be infallible adopts, be false, all are false; “ for

“ for God and the Devil will not act in Con-
 “ junction.” But *Miracles* (as St. Paul ob-
 serves) are a Sign, not to them that believe,
 but to them that believe not, 1 Cor. xiv. 22,
 If therefore they can do any real Miracles, let
 them come and work them in a Protestant Na-
 tion, in the Face of us *Heretics* (as you are
 pleased to call us, though we are indeed the
 true *Catholics*, and you yourselves the Main-
 tainers of *Heresy* and False Doctrine) and that
 will be doing some Service to your Cause. But
 it is what, I believe, they never will attempt.

Pa. You who deny the Infallibility of the
 Church, will, very likely, reject her *Traditions*.
 too, though St. Paul says, *Stand fast, Bre-*
thren, and hold the Traditions which ye have
been taught, whether by Word, or our Epistle,
 2 Thes. ii. 15.

Not Tra-
 ditions,
 but Scrip-
 ture the
 Rule of
 Faith.

Pr. St. Paul might well exhort the *Thessa-*
lonians to take Heed to Oral Traditions, be-
 fore the whole Scripture was wrote, and when
 'tis probable they knew the Gospel only that
 Way; but after the whole Revealed Will of
 God was written, what further Occasion was
 there for such a Caution? But Apostolical Tra-
 ditions, that are truly such, we still very rea-
 dily receive; as those concerning the Observa-
 tion of the Lord's Day, and of the Govern-
 ment of the Church by Bishops: And you can
 never prove that there do any Apostolical Tra-
 ditions subsist, which we reject. The Apo-
 stles often declare that they delivered the whole
 Will of God, and manifested the Truth in Sin-
 cerity, not handling the Word of God de-
 ceitfully, or parcelling it out, as those that walk

in Craftiness and Dishonesty, 2 Cor. ii. 17, Ch. iv. 2.

Pa. I grant the Apostles did deliver the whole Will of God to their Successors, but Part of it in Writing, and Part by Word of Mouth: and where is the Absurdity of this?

Pr. It is most absurd: for I ask you, whether would they hand down the more *difficult* Part, or the more *easy*, by Unwritten Tradition? Not the more Difficult, for that would be in greater Danger of being corrupted or mistaken in an Oral Conveyance than any of the rest: Nor yet the more Easy, for that might full as well be written, as transmitted in so uncertain a Method. May not any Thing be written as plainly as it can be spoken? and will it not be much more lasting so, and less liable to be changed or falsified? Dare you impeach the Wisdom of the Spirit of God, by saying, that he was unable to commit his whole Will to Writing, or to express himself in such a Manner as to be understood? Or dare you asperse his Goodness, by saying, that he was unwilling to reveal himself so as to profit and save Mankind. The Apostles were no more than Instruments in the Case, and all this Blasphemy would fall upon the Holy Ghost. In Truth, considering the Weakness and Wickedness of the World, the Obnoxiousness of some to mistake, and the Designs of others to deceive, 'tis impracticable for any Doctrines to be conveyed pure and uncorrupted by Unwritten Tradition. In the many Channels through which they flow, in the many Ages through

through which they pass, every one of which has a full Power to pervert them, they cannot help acquiring a foreign Tincture. In the Times of the Patriarchs, when the Lives of Men were very long, and the Principles of Religion few, they then had the best Chance to be preserved sound by Tradition, since two Persons, *Metbusalem* and *Sem*, could deliver them down from *Adam* to *Abram* through two thousand Years: And yet, notwithstanding this, we find that the World was so generally over-spread with Idolatry in *Abram's* Time, that God thought proper to make a new Revelation to Him. The Tract of the *Jewish* Country was small; a distinct Body of the Nation was appointed for the Priesthood, who were to attend only on Spiritual Concerns; they had a standing Oracle of *Urim* and *Thummim* among them, and a Succession of Prophets; so that one would have thought they might have preserved their Traditions true and genuine, if they had any: And yet we find our Saviour charging them with *teaching for Divine Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, and with *making the Word of God of none Effect through their Traditions*, Mark vii. 7, 13. A Tradition it was that the *Messiah* should be a great Temporal Prince, and appear in much worldly Splendor, which made them reject their Saviour. Through Adherence to Tradition, and the Belief of ancient Stories, the Heathens practised the most abominable Idolatry: And all the Errors of your Church may justly be imputed to your building so much on that stale Pretence, to your *for-*
saking

taking the Fountain of living Waters, the Scriptures, and hewing out to yourselves Cisterns, broken Cisterns, which will hold no Water. Even in the first Age of the Church, the Doctrine of the *Millennium*, or of Christ's Reign upon Earth for a thousand Years, was believed on Pretence of a Tradition from the Apostles, and soon after the *Communicating of Infants*; and yet both these Doctrines are rejected by yourselves. If therefore a false Tradition could be propagated so early, how much more easy was it for such to rise in later Days? And the Heretics of all Times have refused to be tried by the Scriptures, and have appealed to Tradition, imagining they could defend themselves in that uncertain and fluctuating Sea.

Pa. If you will not admit Unwritten Tradition, is that any Reason why you should reject *Written Tradition*, and the Holy Fathers of the Church, and its *Councils*?

Pr. The Fathers of the Church we honour and esteem; and those of the three first Centuries we receive and allow; for these were the purest Times of Christianity (though not entirely without Error) while the Streams were near the Fountain-Head, and before the Church was corrupted by Faction and Ambition. These we receive, not on Account of any Infallibility of their own, but because their Decisions are agreeable to Scripture. But the Interpretations of Scripture, that are given us by many of the rest, are often groundless and erroneous; Fathers and Councils of one Age contradict what had been affirmed by Fathers and

and Councils of another, and Fathers of the same Age unsay what their Cotemporaries had said. And the Reason of this is, because, though they were pious and good Men, yet they were frail and fallible. However, those of the Primitive Times are far from defending the Errors of your Church; and we have often joined Issue with you at their Bar, with Victory on our side, and are ready to do it again.

Pa. But the Authority of the Church is before and above that of the Scriptures, because she is Witness of the Truth of Scripture.

Pr. That is a Circle in Arguing, and therefore proves Nothing. The Scriptures, I suppose, have no Authority but what the Church pleases to give them, and yet the Church has no Authority but what the Scriptures give her. Surely, it is not the Church that constitutes Religion, but Religion that constitutes the Church. But it is not your Church, but all Churches; not only the Priesthood, but the Laity; nay, even its Enemies and Infidels, that have given Testimony to the Truth and Genuineness of Scripture. If I be Witness to the Title of a King, does it follow that I am above the King? or, if I have attested a Covenant, does that give me a Right to make it speak my own Sense? Consider that terrible Denunciation at the End of the Book of *Rev.* and take heed how you *add to, or diminish* ought from the Doctrines of Scripture.

In the great Points of Duty, in all Things that are *requisite to Life and Godliness*, the
Scripture

Scripture expressly declares its own *Sufficiency* and *Plainness*; and that was the Sense of all Antiquity concerning it. *From a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures* (says St. Paul in the iii. of his 2 Ep. to Timothy) *which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness; That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.* If therefore the Old Testament, of which St. Paul there speaks, were sufficient to produce so blessed an Effect, how much more the New? And St. John, in the Conclusion of his Gospel, Chap. xx. 30, 31. tells us, *that many other Signs truly did Jesus, in the Presence of his Disciples, which are not written in this Book: But these are written; that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name.* Now, if St. John could affirm of his Gospel singly, that it was a sure Rule to lead us to Eternal Life, how much rather may the same be averred of the whole Bible?

Pa. We do not deny that the Scriptures contain what is necessary to Salvation, if properly interpreted; but are your *Mechanics*, or *Farmers*, capable of interpreting them properly? Are they not full of Difficulties? Does not St. Peter say of St. Paul's Epistles, that in them are *some Things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned, and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures,* unto

The
Scriptures
denied to
the Laity.

unto their own Destruction? 2 Pet. iii. 16.

This is the Reason why we do not suffer them to be read promiscuously, but reserve them to the Interpretation of the Catholic Church, lest some Persons, instead of finding wholesome Food, should meet with Poison.

Pr. A Mechanic, or a Farmer, may understand as much of them, as will carry him to Heaven, if it be not his own Fault. If he can read, he will find his Duty to God, to his Neighbour, and himself, and its Sanctions, plainly described; the great Duty of Repentance, with God's Acceptance of it for *Christ's* Sake; the Office of the Holy Ghost in comforting and purifying the Hearts of the Faithful, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments, fully explained. Now, in these Things, all that is necessary for Salvation consists. And 'tis with respect to these Things that we say the holy Scriptures are a clear Rule. Difficulties, indeed, there will still be in the Scriptures; but then they are such as are not necessary to be resolved or unriddled; viz. dark Prophecies, Allusions to Customs long since forgotten, and Proverbial Expressions peculiar to certain Countries and Times. These Things serve to raise our Attention, to excite our Industry, and to prompt us to Humility, and modest Conceptions of ourselves, when we are considering the deep and sometimes incomprehensible Things of God. But you are more cruel than Tyrants that destroy Men's Lives by Famine, since you take away from their Souls the Bread of Life. The Old Testament was written for the *Hebrews* in *Hebrew*, and the

the whole People, Women and Children, were commanded to read it. The New Testament was written in *Greek*, because that was a Language then most generally understood; and it was very early translated into the Languages of several Nations. The Epistles are directed not to the Priests only, but to all the Faithful, and therefore all ought to have the free Use of them. To no Purpose do you alledge, that the Scriptures ought to be forbid the Common People, lest they should broach Heresies out of them; you might as well say, we must not *eat* and *drink*, for fear of being *poisoned*. Besides, the great Heresies have not been set on Foot by the Vulgar, but by Priests of eminent Place and Note in the Church. But though you have no Reason in Divinity, yet you have a strong one in Policy, for not suffering the People to read the Scriptures, because your Errors and Corruptions are so plainly condemned therein. You have an irreconcilable Quarrel against them; you speak contemptuously of them, calling them a *Leaden Rule*, and a *Dead Letter*; and 'tis plain you would destroy them out of the World, if you could.

Transub-
stantia-
tion.

Pa. No, by no means; we are not afraid to try our Doctrines at the Bar of the Scriptures; for we are able to prove them by it. The principal Point is *Transubstantiation*, and it is very defensible in this Way.

Pr. I insist that it is contrary to Scripture; therefore produce your Proofs. Not to mention that it was not established till above a thousand Years after *Christ*, in one of the most

most dark, and ignorant, and corrupt Ages of the Church.*

Pa. † I prove it, first, from the express and plain Words of *Christ* himself, the eternal Truth, delivered at the Time of the first Institution of this Blessed Sacrament, and recorded in no less than four different Places in the New Testament, viz. *Matt.* xxvi. 26, 27. *Mark* xiv. 22, 24. *Luke* xxii. 19. 1 *Cor.* xi. 24, 25. In all these Places, *Christ* himself assures us, that what he gives us in the Blessed Sacrament is his own Body and Blood.

Pr. Those Texts are, indeed, plain enough; they are a plain Figure; for in a literal Interpretation (besides the horrid Consequences of it) they are not true. For our Lord's Body was not then broken, nor sacrificed for us, nor was his Blood then shed. And in two of those Passages it is said, *The Cup is the New Testament in my Blood*, which, if literally understood, must imply, that the Cup is transubstantiated into the New Testament, or that the New Covenant is a Cup, which, instead of containing the Blood, is contained in the Blood. Whereas the Meaning is plainly this: As our Lord had said in the former Sentence, *This is my Body*, i. e. This Bread represents to you, or is a Sign of my Body; so here he says, *This Cup is the new Covenant*, meaning,

E

ing,

* See Proofs against *Transubstantiation* from the *Fathers*, and an Account of its Rise, in Archbishop *Tillotson's* Discourse upon it.

† N. B. From this Place, the Papist's Arguments are taken from the *Catholic Christian Instructed*, and are mostly put in the Author's own Words.

ing, This Cup of Wine represents to you, or is a Sign or Pledge of the New Covenant made in my Blood.

Pa. Why will you take these Words of *Christ* in a figurative, rather than a literal Sense?

Pr. Because the literal Sense is unintelligible, and contradicts both our Reason and Senses; and it is an acknowledged Rule in interpreting Scripture, that where the literal Sense would imply any Thing false, absurd, or criminal, (and a Crime it would be to eat Man's Flesh) there we are to understand it figuratively. Nothing is more common in Scripture, than to call the Sign by the Name of the Thing signified: Thus, *the three Baskets are three Days; the seven Ears of Corn are seven Years; the Rough Goat is the King of Grecia;* and, what is more to my Purpose, God Almighty is called *a Shield* and *a Rock*; nay, our Saviour calls himself *a Way, a Door, a Vine, and the Bread that came down from Heaven,* and St. *John* very often calls him a *Lamb*: but is he then really transubstantiated into a Lamb, a Door, and a Vine? Is it not plain that these must be understood to be only Figures of him? And so must Bread and Wine in the Sacrament too, unless we will involve ourselves in the most palpable Absurdities and Contradictions.

Pa. In certain Cases, when a Thing is already known to be a Sign and Figure of something else, which it signifies or represents, it may indeed be said to be such or such a Thing: but 'tis not the same in the first Institution of
a Sign

a Sign or Figure, because when a Thing is not known before-hand to be a Sign or Representation of some other Thing, to call it abruptly by a foreign Name would be contrary to all Laws of Speech, and both absurd and unintelligible. As for Instance, if a Person by an Art of Memory had appointed within himself, that an *Oak-Tree* should be a Sign or Memorandum of *Alexander the Great*, and pointing to the Tree should gravely tell his Friends (who were not acquainted with his Design) *This is that Hero that overcame Darius*; such a Proposition as this would justly be censured as nonsensical and unworthy of a wise Man. The Application is easy.

Pr. The Case you put is not parallel. Covenants had been confirmed of old by *eating* and *drinking*, as well as by *shedding of Blood*: Our Saviour confirmed his new Covenant by both: and the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, are much more easy and natural Symbols of *Christ's* Body pierced, and his Blood shed, than an *Oak-Tree* can be of *Alexander the Great*. Besides, we easily discern why our Saviour says the one, but we cannot conceive why any body should say the other. All Figures and Metaphors were new at first, and yet no less just than they are now: I dare say the first Man who pointed to his *Deeds*, and said, *That is my Estate*, was very well understood, and no one fancied that he meant those Deeds were really his Houses and Lands. And I insist, there is no more natural Relation between our Saviour and a Rock, or between our Saviour and a Door, than

there is between our Saviour's Sacrifice and Bread and Wine ; the latter therefore may be understood figuratively as well as the former.

Pa. Besides the Proofs already alledged, we have a strong one *John vi. 51, &c.* In which Place the *eating of Christ's Flesh, and the drinking his Blood*, is so clearly and so frequently inculcated ; and we are so plainly told that the Bread which *Christ* was to give is that very *Flesh* which he gave for the Life of the World, that one must be resolved to keep one's Eyes shut against the Light, if one will not see so plain a Truth.

Pr. I do not suppose our Saviour's Discourse there relates to the Sacrament, but to believing in his Incarnation and Death ; and many of your own Communion are of the same Opinion. Instruction, and Faith in *Christ* consequent thereupon, is often represented in the Old Testament by eating and drinking ; *Isai. lv. 1, 3. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, &c. Incline your Ear and come unto me, &c.* And in one of the Apocryphal Books it is said of Wisdom, *He that eateth me shall yet be hungry, and he that drinketh me shall yet be thirsty ; yet you do not imagine we really eat and drink Wisdom.* However, if you will take the Words literally, you must suppose that *Christ* was transubstantiated into *Bread* too, which you will scarce be so hardy as to assert. But our Lord explains himself, ver. 63. where he says, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing : The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life : i. e.*
they

they are to be understood in a Spiritual Sense, and I am to be received by Faith.

Pa. No, the Flesh separated from the Spirit does indeed profit Nothing; but we believe *the Soul and Divinity of Christ is present in the Sacrament together with his Flesh.* Besides, if the Flesh of Christ were of no Profit, he would never have taken Flesh for us, and his Incarnation and Death would be unprofitable to us.

Pr. Our Saviour's Flesh and Sacrifice may be profitable for us, without our eating it in the Sacrament: but your Doctrine makes your Priests greater Creators than Christ himself; for Christ only created the Worlds, Angels and Men; but one of your Priests, it seems, can make, can create God, as often as he pleases. According to you, all depends upon the Intention of the Priest: Thus you make the Christianity and the Salvation of Numbers depend on the Goodness of one Man's Heart. Have you any other Arguments, Sir, for the literal Interpretation of the Passages referred to?

Pa. Yes, I have. Because Christ was then all alone with his twelve Apostles, his Bosom Friends and Confidants, to whom he was always accustomed to explain in clear Terms, whatever was obscure in his Parables or other Discourses to the People: Therefore if the Apostles had not understood him literally, they would have desired an Explanation. And because he was at that Time making a Covenant, which was to last as long as Time itself should last; Now as he who makes a
Covenant,

Covenant, designs that what he covenants should be rightly observed and fulfilled; so of consequence he desires it should be rightly understood; and therefore always expresses himself in plain and clear Terms.

Pr. The Apostles understood Christ's Words as we do, and so they are plain enough; but if they had understood him as you do, then they might well have expostulated,—Lord, how can this Wine be thy Blood, when thy Blood is yet flowing in thy Veins? How can this Bread be thy Body broken, when we see thy Body whole and entire? How canst thou hold thyself in thy Hand? Dost thou bless and sanctify thyself? Or art thou a Sacrament or Figure of thyself? Would not the Disciples, who were *Jews*, and detested the Eating of Blood, have much more detested the eating the Blood of their beloved Master? Does not human Nature recoil and tremble at the Thought of eating Man's Flesh? How much rather ought we to abhor the Notion of chewing with our Teeth the real Body of our dear Redeemer, of our kind and gracious Benefactor! A Covenant too may be very plain, and yet have a Figure or Metaphor in it. So the Christian has, and so also the Jewish had: for God said of *Circumcision* in old Time, *Gen. xvi. 10. This is my Covenant*, when yet it was only the Rite or Ceremony of entering into that Covenant; and so likewise Moses calls the *Lamb slain the Lord's Passover*, *Exod. xii. 11*. But how do you suppose the Body of Christ to be present in the Sacrament?

Pa
Covenant

Pa. In some Sort after the Manner of a Spirit. It may indeed be called a *Spiritual Body*, 1 Cor. xv. 44. not but that it still remains a true Body, as to all that is essential to a Body; but that it partakes in some Measure of the Qualities and Properties of a Spirit.

Pr. A *Spiritual Body*, in a strict Interpretation, is as much a Contradiction as *Immaterial Matter*. A glorified Body, though it be ethereal, and unlike our present Bodies, and in some Sense *Spiritual*, because of its Activity and Refinement, must (as you allow) still be a Body, and have Blood in it, and consequently Extension; therefore it cannot be contained in a Wafer, or in the smallest Part of a Wafer.

Pa. Yes, it may by the Almighty Power of God: Which Answer, if it satisfy you not, I remit you to the *Cartesian* Philosophers, who will tell you, that as the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament, are contained precisely in the same Circumscription and Dimensions, as the Bread and Wine were before the Consecration, it follows of Course that they must affect our Senses in the same Manner: Now Colour, Taste, &c. according to Modern Philosophy, are nothing but the Affections of our Senses.

Pr. The Body of Christ, being of the same Size and Dimension as a *Human Body*, cannot possibly be crowded in a Wafer, or in the smallest Particle of a Wafer, unless you will affirm that the same Body may, at the same Time, be five or six Foot long, and only a Quarter of an Inch, or the thousandth Part of an

an Inch long; and you might as well say that twice ten make twenty, and at the same Time may make only two. And though Colour and Taste be but Affections of our Senses, yet our Senses, when in proper Perfection, in a due Medium, and at a due Distance, never fail to make a right Report about Colour and Taste. Can one human Body be in Heaven, and at *Rome*, and in ten thousand other Places at once? Can whole Christ be eat ten thousand Times over, and yet whole Christ remain?

Pa. Yes, God, *with whom nothing is impossible*, can effect that, as well as he can make a *Camel go through the Eye of a Needle*; he can make one Body be in two Places at once, as well as Christ could go *through the Door when it was shut*.

Pr. The Camel's going through the Eye of a Needle is only a Proverbial Expression, (there was a narrow Passage in Jerusalem called the Needle's Eye) and not to be strictly understood; for if it was, not one Rich Man could be saved: and we do not suppose that Christ went through the Door, when it was shut, but that he held the Eyes of the Apostles, while he opened it and shut it again. I think it is universally agreed, that though God be Almighty, he cannot work a Contradiction; he cannot make a Thing be and not be at the same Time; he cannot both be the God of Truth and a Lyar; and yet this is reckoned no Diminution of his Power. But pray, do not you allow, that the consecrated Bread and Wine may be corrupted, and that

it nourishes the Body of the Receiver? If so, how is it the Body of Christ?

Pa. This Sacrament was not ordained for the Nourishment of the Body, but of the Soul; though I do not deny but the Body also is nourished, when we receive the Blessed Eucharist, not by the Substance of Bread and Wine, which is not there, nor by the Body and Blood of Christ, which is incorruptible, and therefore cannot be digested for our Corporeal Nourishment; but by the Quantity and other Accidents of Bread and Wine (if with the *Aristotelian* Philosophers you suppose them really distinguished from Matter and Substances) or by another Substance, which the Almighty substitutes, when by the ordinary Course of Digestion the Sacramental Species are changed, and the Body and Blood of Christ cease to be there.

Pr. Another Substance! And Cease to be there! This is Hocus Pocus, and Legerdemain, with a Witness! If the Bread and Wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, when consecrated by the Words of your Priest, surely they must be defecrated by his Words again, before they can turn to another Substance. And if they cease to be there, they must go down into the Draught which purges all Meats: O shameful to say! As for your Philosophy, you might as well affirm that a Body may subsist without Extension; as that the Accidents of a Body, Colour, Taste, &c. can subsist without that Body, except only in Abstraction and Idea.

Pa. But St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xi. 27.
Whosoever shall eat this Bread and drink this

Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. How so, if what the unworthy Receiver takes be no more than Bread and Wine? And again, 1 Cor. xi. 29. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body. How shall he discern it, if it be not there really present?

Pr. He who receives without Repentance and Faith, is guilty of putting a Contempt upon the Body and Blood of Christ, which were given and shed for his Salvation. And the Case of the *Corinthians*, here considered, was, that they did not discern or *distinguish* the Bread and Wine, which were consecrated as Memorials of Christ's Body and Blood, from common Bread and Wine, but made themselves drunk at the Sacrament.

Pa. We have also Visions, and Miracles, and Infallibility for the Proof of this Doctrine.

Pr. You know we have considered those Things before. To prove Transubstantiation by a Miracle, is (as one happily expressed it) to prove to a Man by what he sees, that he does not see what he sees. Can the Infallibility of any Church make God's written Word clash and disagree with the Law of Nature, with the Word written in our Hearts? Or rather, does not such a prodigious Error prove that there is no Infallibility in Man, in the Son of Man that is a Worm?

Pa. But if the Son of Man be so low and weak, ought he not to *captivate every Thought to the Obedience of Faith*, and believe every Thing that the Church bids him?

Pr.

Pr. No, only every Thing that God bids him.

Pa. Do not you believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, and yet the Doctrine of the Trinity has great Difficulties in it?

Pr. We believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, because it is revealed in Scripture; the other is not so. We may, and ought to believe many Things above our Reason and Senses, but nothing contrary to them. We may believe a Mystery, but not a Contradiction. We do not say, that three are one in the same Respect, we do not say that three Persons are one Person; but that three Persons are one Substance or Nature. In this Case the Subject of our Consideration is the infinite Perfection and Nature of God, which is confessedly incomprehensible; but in the other Case, finite familiar Things, Bread and Wine only, of which (if of any Thing in the World) our Senses and Reason must be proper Judges. If the Constitution of our Nature be so uncertain, and so little to be depended upon, that our Senses, when rightly qualified, may deceive us, there is an End of Reason, as well as Religion, and we must be Sceptics in Practice as well as Principle, since almost all the Things we are concerned with in this World are sensible Objects, and a great Part of our Knowledge arises from Sensation. If our Senses are not to be credited, then could not the Apostles know that our blessed Saviour arose from the Dead, then could not unbelieving *Thomas* have been convinced by thrusting his Hand into his Saviour's Side. He knew him to be the same

only by seeing and handling him ; but by more Evidences than these do we know the Bread in the Eucharist to be Bread, and the Wine to be Wine. At this rate, if the Senses of the Spectators might deceive them, our Saviour could not have appealed to his Miracles, as an Evidence of his Mission ; he could not have said, *The Works that I do bear Witness of me ;* he could not have said, *Believe me for the very Works Sake.* Thus you see this Doctrine undermines the Foundation of Christianity.

Pa. But cannot God impose upon our Senses in a particular Case ?

Pr. Yes ; but he has no where said he will do so.

Pa. We do allow the Use of one of our Senses in this Case, *viz.* hearing the Words of Scripture, *This is my Body ;* and St. Paul says *Faith cometh by Hearing.*

Pr. You do well to mention only Hearing, because you do not allow the People to see the Word of God. But you might even as well deny the Use of the five Senses, as admit of only one of them. For indeed you cannot depend upon *it* ; if you must not trust your Senses without Reserve, you cannot be sure that the Words, *This is my Body,* are in the Bible. But what is worst of all, this Doctrine of yours ends in plain Idolatry ; when a Bit of Bread is believed to be God, when it is called God, and is in all Respects worshipped as God. This is down-right Idolatry.

Pa. How are we Idolaters, when we intend, at least, to worship Christ in the Sacrament ?

Pr.

Pr. So did the Heathens intend to worship God, when they worshipped the Sun; and yet this Intention did not excuse them from being gross Idolaters.

Pa. The Course of the Dispute has led us to speak so largely of the *General Arguments* and *Doctrines*, and of *Transubstantiation*, that we will (if you please) consider only two or three Points more.

Pr. What do you say in Defence of *Half-Communion*, or denying the Cup to the Laity? Half-Communion.

Pa. I say that whole Christ is under one Kind, and therefore there is no Occasion to receive both.

Pr. But I think I have proved that Christ is really under neither Kind, any further than by the Presence of his Grace and Blessing; therefore you ought to comply with Christ's own Institution, if you would have the Benefit of it.

Pa. 'Tis only a Matter of Discipline, not of Faith, whether we receive under one Kind or both.

Pr. I thought, that every Thing revealed in holy Scripture, had been a Matter of Faith. And how will you get over Christ's express Words, *Matt. xxvi. 27. Drink ye all of this?*

Pa. These Words were addressed to the twelve Apostles, who were all that were then present. Now 'tis certain that many Things were spoken in the Gospel to the Apostles in Quality of Pastors of the Church, which were not directed to the Laity; as when they were commissioned to preach and baptize.

Pr.

Sacrifice
of the
Mass.

Pr. True; but in those Cases there was some Reason for excepting the Laity; here there is none. You might as well deny the Laity both Kinds, because they are not Priests, as one; for none of the Laity received either at the Institution; unless the Apostles were Lay-men at that Time, as probably indeed they were nothing more; for their Commission as Ministers of the Church, seems not to have been given them till after our Saviour's Resurrection; *Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. John xx. 21, &c.* It seems Christ's pretended Vicar is wiser than Christ himself, and can dispense with any Thing he has delivered. But how come you to call the Mass a Sacrifice?

Pa. Because by the Consecration, the real Body and Blood of Christ our Victim, which for us was immolated upon the Cross, is in the Mass exhibited and presented to God.

Pr. I insist again, the Body of Christ is not there: and if it was, still there would not be a proper Sacrifice; for a Sacrifice implies the Death of the Victim, *and Christ being once dead, dieth no more.* He is a Priest for ever, because he continues to present the Merits of his Sacrifice once offered to the Father in Heaven, but not in the Eucharist. The Scripture is plainly on our Side: *This he did once [i. e. once for all] when he offered up himself, Heb. vii. 27. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, Ch. ix. 25. And, By one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, Ch. x. 14.* The Fathers did indeed call the Eucharist an *unbloody Sacrifice* (which by the Way is an Argument against Transubstantiation;)

stantiation;) and we, by an easy Figure, call it the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving. You say *Mass in Latin* too, much to the *Mass in* Edification of the People, I warrant you, who *in Latin* do not understand a Word of it.

Pa. Why may they not be edified, when they are well instructed in the Nature of it, and have other good Prayers and Devotions put into their Hands?

Pr. Whatever other Devotions they use, that does not make it a common and united Worship of Almighty God; they might as well pray at Home, since they cannot *with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God*. Besides, what shall poor People do, who have the Misfortune not to have learnt to read? They must tell over their *Beads*, I suppose, and say their *Hail Mary* and *Pater Nosters*, kneel to the Images, and kiss them, and pray to God and the Saints through them, and gaze at the Finery of the Chapel.

Pa. For the devoutly and profitably concurring in Sacrifice offered to God, 'tis not only not necessary that the People should hear or recite the same Prayers with the Priest, but even the very seeing of him is more than God was pleased to require in his Law. Hence we find, *Luke i. 10. that the whole Multitude of the People were praying without, when Zacharias went into the Temple to burn Incense.*

Pr. I repeat it, the Public Worship of God is not properly a Sacrifice. 'Tis artful enough in you, however, to bring a Text out of the Gospel, which relates to the *Jewish Priesthood*, and to pass it as a Christian Rule. What have

we

we to do with the *Jewish Ceremonies*, I pray? If your Priests must be all in all, they ought to be damned for the People, if any of them miscarry. But how will you answer a whole Chapter of *St. Paul's*, *1 Cor. xiv.*

Pa. *St. Paul* does not speak there of the *Liturgy* of the Church.

Pr. I know not what you call the *Liturgy* of the Church; he speaks, at least, of what is transacted in the Public Worship of God in the Congregation, and plainly forbids Prayers in an unknown Tongue.

Pa. Ay, new strange extemporary Prayers; but ours is the ancient *Liturgy* of the Church.

Pr. New or old, so long as the People cannot understand it, it is strange and unedifying to them. But you who put your *Non-obstante* upon *Christ* with respect to *Half-Communion*, may well do the same upon *St. Paul* with respect to *Public Prayer*.

Pa. The Western Church has used *Latin* in her sacred Offices, even from the Apostles Days.

Pr. In the Apostles Days, *Latin* was more generally understood, especially in *Italy*. If *Latin* be more acceptable to God than any other Language, why was it not used in *Greece* too?

Pa. We keep to the *Latin* for a greater Uniformity in the Public Worship; that so a Christian, in whatsoever Country he chances to be, may still find the *Liturgy* performed in the same Manner.

Pr. What is it to him how it be performed, if he does not understand it? You had better speak

Speak out, and tell us the true Reason: It was so ordered that your *Italian* Priests and Bishops might be able to hold Benefices in *England* and other Places, where they did not understand the Language.

Pa. No; we do it to avoid the Changes, to which all vulgar Languages, as we find by Experience, are daily exposed: For the Church is unwilling to be chopping and changing her Liturgy at every Turn of Language.

Pr. What Harm would there be if all the Language were changed, so long as the Sense is retained? But you have chopped, and changed, and corrupted your Liturgy much in the Course of Time; and with more Ease, because it is *Latin*.

Pa. You reject the *Sacrament of Penance* too, I suppose, though it be absolutely necessary to Salvation. Sacra-
ment of
Penance.

Pr. In what do you make Penance consist?

Pa. In Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction, on the Part of the Penitent, and in Absolution on the Part of the Minister.

Pr. How do you prove that the Minister has a Power to forgive Sins? Absolu-
tion.

Pa. From *John xx. 22, 23. Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever Sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them, and whosesoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.*

Pr. And can you believe, that your Priests are as much inspired by the Holy Ghost, as the Apostles were? Can you believe that your Priests have a Power to discern Mens Hearts? That you will hardly say. And if not, they may pass Sentence of Absolution erroneously;

through the Dissimulation of a pretended Penitent. It is not therefore true, that *whosoever Sins your Priests forgive, they are forgiven.*

Pa. But do not your Ministers also absolve Sinners?

Pr. If you please, they declare God's Absolution to the sincerely penitent.

Pa. Does not your Church stand up as much for Absolution as ours, when, in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, the Priest is directed to say, *By Christ's Authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy Sins?*

Pr. That is only a taking off the Censures of the Church, and suffering the sick Man to die in the Peace of it, from which he shall have no Benefit, unless he be sincerely penitent. Besides, we do not reckon that Form of Absolution as necessary, or a *Sine quâ non*, as you do. Does not the Scripture say, *Who can forgive Sins but God alone? Mark ii. 7.*

Pa. We do not believe that any Man can forgive Sins by his own Power, as no Man by his own Power can raise the Dead to Life: But as God has sometimes made Men his Instruments in raising the Dead to Life, so we believe that he has been pleased to appoint that his Ministers should, in Virtue of his Commission, absolve repenting Sinners.

Pr. When we can see any of your Priests raise the Dead to Life, then we will believe that they can absolutely forgive Sins. If a Man truly repents, God will forgive him, though the Priest should refuse it; for Repentance and Remission of Sins, through the Me-

diation

diation of Christ (which is the Tenor of the Gospel Covenant) was preached; before the Christian Priesthood existed: And if a Man does not repent, it is not in the Power of any Priest upon Earth to forgive him. But what do you mean by *Confession*? Confession.

Pa. A full and sincere Acculation made to God's Minister, of all mortal Sins, which after a diligent Examination of Conscience a Person can call to his Remembrance.

Pr. We insist upon a particular and exact Confession to God, but why must we confess to Men? What Scripture do you bring for it?

Pa. *Numb. v. 6, 7, and Matt. iii. 6.*

Pr. Why must I remind you so often, that the Laws and Customs of the *Jews* do not bind *Christians*? However, in those Passages there is not a Word about *Auricular Confession*. Indeed, the Necessity of it was disputed even in the *twelfth Century*, in the Time of *Peter Lombard*, who first coined five of your Sacraments.

Pa. But it was the Practice of the first Christians, *Acts xix. 18. Many that believed came, and confessed and declared their Deeds.*

Pr. So have many besides those, when strung with the Remorse of a guilty Conscience, though not commanded to do it. But the Confession there mentioned, probably relates only to their opening the Mysteries of their Arts.

Pa. We have strong Proof of the Necessity of Confession from the Commission above-mentioned, which Christ has given to his Ministers, of forgiving and retaining Sins. For

'tis visible that this Commission cannot be rightly executed, without taking Cognizance of the State of the Soul of him who desires to be absolved from his Sins, by Virtue of this Commission.

Pr. Why may not a *general Absolution*, declared in the Name of God to such as truly repent, and confess their Sins to God (which is the Practice of our Church) suffice as well as a *particular Absolution*, pronounced by a Priest in private, which must still be precarious because he knows not Mens Hearts? whereas in the former Case, the Sins of those who really repent will certainly be *forgiven*, and the Sins of those who do not repent *retained*.

Pa. What will you say then to that Text of *St. James*, Ch. v. 16. *Confess your Sins one to another, and pray one for another.*

Pr. That you might as well conclude from it, that the Priest ought to confess to the People, as the People to the Priest; for certainly both People and Priest are to pray for one another. There are, indeed, some Cases, in which we ought to confess our Sins to Man, as well as unto God; with respect to which it is that *St. James* gives this Precept. They are principally these three. First, if we have injured or offended our Neighbour, in his Person, or in his Estate, or Reputation, whether openly or privately, we must ingenuously confess our Fault to him, endeavour to make him Restitution and Satisfaction, and desire his Pardon, before we can hope for Forgiveness at God's Hand. Again, if by any notorious and open Crimes we have given Offence to the Church,

Church, and are become liable to its Censures, or have them actually inflicted upon us, we must make our Confession to the Church, before we can be restored to its Peace. Lastly, if, for any private Reasons, we desire the Counsel or Prayers of some pious and good Man, we are most prudentially recommended to a Minister of the Gospel, who is entrusted with Souls, has Skill in such Things, and will be secret and faithful. But as for *Auricular Confession* of all our Sins to a Priest, which your Church insists so much upon, in order to raise the Power and Authority of the Priesthood, it is merely a human Invention, unwarranted by the Word of God, an unnecessary Burden, and a Piece of Discipline that is made the most dangerous Use of. Your next Part of Penitence is *Contrition*; what do you mean by it?

Pa. A hearty Sorrow for having offended so good a God, with a firm Purpose of Amendment.

Pr. Well, but your Church allows that *Attrition* is sufficient; which is only such a Sorrow for Sin, as proceeds merely from the Fear of Punishment, and the Terrors of Hell-fire, without any Mixture of the Love of God in it: And she further asserts, that the Sacraments confer Grace *ex Opere operato*, by their very being received. Thus if a Man have but some Sorrow for his Sins, and confess to a Priest, and procure his Absolution (which Absolution is not denied, but in Case of a Relapse into Heresy) he shall certainly be saved. Is not this in Effect to promise Salvation to
your

Satis-
faction.

your whole Communion, to the bad as well as the good? Is it not wounding Religion in its Vitals? Is it not opening a Gap to all Licentiousness, by a Prospect of Pardon at last? It is a Way to magnify your Sacraments and your Priests; but is it not to set the Kingdom of God at nought, and to vilify the Gospel of Christ, which has laid upon us a great many difficult Conditions of Salvation; and has commanded us to be *pure as our Father which is in Heaven is pure, and perfect as he is perfect*? As for your third Part of Penance, *Satisfaction* (which you define a faithful Performance of the Penance enjoined by the Priest) I reject the Term; for the doing my Duty now is a present Debt, and cannot therefore *satisfy* for my past Guilt; 'tis the Blood of Christ which must do that. And would it not be more honest in your Priests to say, Go and repent of your Sins, and you shall be forgiven; than to say, Go and do the Penance enjoined by me, and you shall be forgiven? In short,

Indul-
gences.

I cannot allow Penance to be a Sacrament; for Christ instituted no Penance but Fasting, and I suppose you will not call Fasting a Sacrament. I desire now to know what is meant by *Indulgences*; for the Meaning of them is much litigated among yourselves.

Pa. By Indulgences we mean, a Releasing of the Debt of Temporary Punishment to true Penitents.

Pr. Will they then prevent the Penitent's suffering any Visitation of Providence for his past Sins? or will they prevent his going to Purgatory?

Pa.

Pa. No, but they will help to get him out of both.

Pr. What do you ground the Doctrine of Indulgences upon?

Pa. On the *Treasure of the Church*; by which I mean a Bank of the Merits of the Saints, joined with those of Christ, of which the Pope has the Keeping.

Pr. Who gave him the Keeping? But I will not allow there is any such Treasure, because it is founded upon the Doctrines of *Merit* and *Merit*.

Supererogation; which Doctrines are false. The first, because our Saviour has taught us to say, *We are unprofitable Servants, we have done but that which was our Duty to do, Luke xvii.*

10. And to make a Work meritorious with God, it is required, that it be not a Debt; that it be really serviceable to him from whom it claims a Reward; that it be perfect and faultless; and that it be performed without his Assistance: but none of these is our Case. The

latter (viz. *Supererogation*) is false, because we are far from being able to do more than

our Duty, inasmuch as our Duty requires us to love the Lord with all our Heart, and Soul, and Strength. Besides, this imaginary Treas-

ure is a great Dishonour to the Merits and Satisfaction of Christ, when those of Sinners are coupled with his. But I believe that *Pur-*

gatory too is an imaginary Place: Pray, what have you to say for it?

Pa. I prove it first from the ancient Practice of *Praying for the Dead*, observed by the Synagogue, or Church of God in the Old Testament, as appears from 2 *Maccab. xii. 42, &c.*

Now

Now if they had not thought that those Souls were in Necessity, and yet were capable of receiving Benefit from their Prayers, it had been Madness to pray for them.

Their
False Ca-
non of
Scripture.

Pr. You do well to fly to the *Apocrypha*, because *Canonical Scripture* affords you not the least Shadow of Proof for it. However, the Sin-Offering, mentioned in that Place, was not made with a regard to Purgatory, but to the Resurrection of the Dead; nor was it offered for the Relaxation of Punishment, but for the Remission of Sins; and of mortal Sin too, for those who were slain, had fallen into Idolatry. The Synagogue therefore were Heretics in your Account. That the weak Writer of this Book of *Maccabees* was not inspired by God, is plain from his own Words, *If I have done well, it is what I desired: but if meanly and slenderly, it is that which I could attain unto, 2 Maccab. xv. 38.* This is not Language fit for the Holy Ghost; but it is a Proof that you make a false Canon of the Word of God by putting this Book into it.

Purga-
tory.

Pa. The Scripture teaches us in many Places, that it is the fixed Rule of God's Justice to render to every Man according to his Works. Those therefore that die in Mortal Sins must go to Hell, and those that die in Venial Sins to Purgatory.

Pr. I deny the Distinction of Mortal and Venial Sins; for lesser Sins, if habitually persisted in, and not repented of, will damn a Man, as certainly as greater. Besides, if God should deal strictly with us according to

our Works, not one could be saved; but that is not the Gospel Covenant.

Pa. The Scripture assures us, *Rev. xxi. 27.* that *there shall in no wise enter into the heavenly Jerusalem any Thing that defileth, or that is defiled.* So that if the Soul is found to have the least Spot or Stain, at the Time of her Departure out of this Life, she cannot go strait to Heaven.

Pr. So does the Scripture assure us, *1 John i. 7.* that *the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.* And if from all, surely from the lesser Stains as well as the greater. And *Rom. viii. 1.* *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*

Pa. Our Saviour informs us, *Matt. xii. 36.* that we are to give Account for every idle Word: Now no one can think that God will condemn a Soul to Hell for every idle Word; therefore there must be another Place of Punishment.

Pr. By every idle Word, in that Place, is meant every false and wicked Word, and for such God will condemn the Impenitent to Hell. *For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned, Ver. 37.*

Pa. St. Paul tells us, *1 Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15.* that every Man's Work shall be made manifest by a fiery Trial; and that they who have built upon the Foundation, which is Christ, Wood, Hay, and Stubble, shall suffer Loss; but themselves shall be saved, yet so as by Fire.

H

Pr.

Pr. That is, they shall be saved with great Difficulty, as it were out of the Fire [*ἐκ πυρός*] which is a common Proverbial Expression, not only in Scripture, but in prophane Authors. The like we have *Amos iv. 11. I have pluckt them as a Fire-brand out of the Fire.* And *Jude 23. Others save with Fear, plucking them out of the Fire.* By the Fire which St. Paul mentions is probably meant Persecution, which would distinguish the false Apostles from the true; nor else the Fire which shall consume all the World at the Day of Judgment, as the Fathers understood it.

Pa. But our Lord tells us, *Matt. xii. 32. that whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.*

Pr. There cannot be any Forgiveness in the next World without Repentance; and you yourselves allow that Repentance has no Place there. It was customary among the Jews to call the Age of the Messiah the World to come, *Heb. ix. 5. vi. 5.* All therefore that our Saviour means is, that the Sin against the Holy Ghost should not be forgiven, even under the mild and merciful Dispensation of the Gospel; it was irremissible, and should never be forgiven.

Pa. Mention is made of a Prison, out of which a Man shall not come till he has paid the uttermost Farthing, *Matt. v. 26.* and our Saviour is said to have gone to preach to the Spirits in Prison, *1 Peter iii. 18, 19, 20.*

Pr. By the first Prison you mention is meant Hell, from which a Man shall not come out till he has paid the last Farthing, i. e. he shall never come out of it. The most proper Interpretation of the other Passage is probably this; Christ, by his eternal Spirit, enabled and inspired *Noah*, to denounce his Threatnings to the old World, who were fettered in the Prison of their Lusts and Sins; for we read in *Genesis*, that *all Flesh had corrupted his Way upon the Earth*: And Sin, in Scripture, is frequently called a Slavery, and Captivity to the Devil; which are Terms equivalent to the Word *φυλακή*, or Prison. Besides, if it proved any Thing relating to a Future State, it would prove too much. It would prove that the Spirit of Christ delivered the Damned out of Hell, and not those that should be saved out of Purgatory; for they are the *Disobedient* that are here said to have been preached to. But this you will not contend for. If you really believe your own Doctrine, that the Pains of Purgatory are equal in Degree to those of Hell, but only of shorter Duration; and that the greatest Part of those that are saved must go thither; surely you must die very uncomfortably and in dismal Apprehensions. Material Bodies may indeed be purified by Fire, but can a Spirit be purged by it in like Manner? It might full as well have been said, that Souls might be washed from their Sins, and bleached and whitened by Water: Only People would not have paid so well to be redeemed from this, as from the other more

raging Element. But what Notion can be more ungenerous, more unworthy of God, than that when he has forgiven the greater, the *Eternal Punishment* of our Sins, he will yet exact the less, the *Temporal Punishment*. God does, indeed, inflict Evil on some good Men in this Life, after he has forgiven them; but it is to correct them for the future, not to punish them for the past. Our blessed Saviour and his Apostles preached, *Repent, and ye shall be forgiven*; and it is a Part of the *New Covenant*, that when we are forgiven, God will remember our Sins and Iniquities no more, *Jer. xxxi. 34*. But it seems the Authors of our Faith were guilty of Prevarication, if we will believe your Church, which has discovered an Exception that they never named. What Blasphemy is this? If this Doctrine tended to fright Men into better Manners, there were less Harm in it: the great Mischief is, that many delay to purify themselves on Account of it, thinking that they may as well suffer the Pains of Purgatory for a great Sin, as for a little one.

Ps. The Evening, Sir, is spent, and it is Time for me to go Home. We will therefore give over disputing, and part in Charity.

N. B. For the Points of the Worship and Intercession of Saints and Angels, Image-Worship, Reliques, Holy Water, &c. insisted on in the *Catholic Christian*, see Dr. Middleton's Letter from Rome, with the Prelatory Discourse, 4 OC 58

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

For the Use of the Unlearned Reader.

A GAINST *the Worship and Intercession of Saints and Angels*, see *Matt.* iv. 10. *Col.* ii. 19, 20. *Rev.* xxii. 9. *Eph.* iii. 12. *1 Tim.* ii. 5. *1 Kings* viii. 39. *Eccl.* ix. 6.

For *Extreme Unction*, *James* v. 14, 15. is alledged; but very erroneously: for the Unction of the first Christians never failed to cure the Sick; whereas the *Romish* Unction can do no such Thing. When the *Miraculous Faith* (like that of *Elias*, *ver.* 17.) ceased in the Church, Unction ought also to have ceased.

Against *Image-Worship* see the second Commandment. Whether the *same* Worship be given to the Image as to the *Prototype*, or as a *subordinate* one, it is *Idolatry*, as appears from the Disputes among their own Doctors, *Aquinas* and *Vasquez* on one Side, and *Bellarmino* on the other.

With Respect to *Fasting*, see *Matt.* vi. 16, 17, 18. Where our Saviour gives us a Rule, how we are to behave when we fast, but leaves the Times and Occasions of it to every Man's Discretion. That it is not unlawful to *eat Flesh* on particular Days, is proved from *Mark* vii. 15, 18. *1 Tim.* iv. 4.

F I N I S.

APPENDIX

For the Use of the Uninstructed Reader.

A GAINST the Worship and Intercession of Saints and Angels, See Matt. iv. 10. Col. ii. 19. 20. Rev. xxi. 3. 1 Thim. ii. 5. 1 Kings viii. 20. Luke ix. 6. For Roman Union, James v. 14. 15. is alleged; but very erroneously; for the Union of the first Christians never failed to cure the Sick; whereas the Roman Union can do no such Thing. When the Africans (like that of Africa, &c. &c.) could in the Church, Union ought also to have

Against Image-Worship, See the second Commandment. Whether the same Worship be given to the Image as to the Prototype, or as a subordinate one, it is likewise as appears from the Disputes among their own Doctors, who are still divided on one Side, and Influence on the other.

With Respect to Feasts, See Matt. xvi. 17. 18. Where our Saviour says of a Jew, how we seek to behave ourselves, but have the Things not Observed of it to every Man's Honour. And that it is not unlawful to eat of such Things, is proved from Mark

4 OC 58